# **BEFORE THE** MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS** STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	) )
MICHAEL NICHOLAS MARKOPOULOS, M.D.)	) )
Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687	) ) )
Respondent	) )
	•

## **DECISION**

The attached Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on January 12, 2018.

IT IS SO ORDERED: December 14, 2017.

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

Kristina Lawson, JD, Chair

Panel B

1	Xavier Becerra		
2	Attorney General of California ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ		
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General JOSEPH F. MCKENNA III	•	
	Deputy Attorney General		
4	State Bar No. 231195 600 West Broadway, Suite 1800		
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6	San Diego, California 92186-5266 Telephone: (619) 738-9417		
7	Facsimile: (619) 645-2061		
8	Attorneys for Complainant		
9			
10		RE THE	
11	DEPARTMENT OF C	O OF CALIFORNIA CONSUMER AFFAIRS	
12	STATE OF C	CALIFORNIA	
13	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 800-2014-000004	
14	Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D.	OAH No. 2017-030745	
15	2683 Via De La Valle, Suite G-626 Del Mar, California 92014-1911	STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER	
16	Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687,	DISCIPLINARY ORDER	
17	Respondent.		
18	•	· .	
19	IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGI	REED by and between the parties to the above-	
20	entitled proceedings that the following matters a	re true:	
21	PAR	TIES	
22	1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) is the Executive Director of the Medical Board		
23	of California (Board). She brought this action solely in her official capacity and is represented in		
24	this matter by Xavier Becerra, Attorney General of the State of California, and by Joseph F.		
25	McKenna III, Deputy Attorney General.		
26	2. Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D., is represented in this proceeding		
27	by attorney Joanna Ryan Shippee, Esq., whose address is: 1010 Second Avenue, Suite 2500, San		
28	Diego, California, 92101.		

STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER (MBC Case No. 800-2014-000004)

3. On or about July 1, 1977, the Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687 to Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, and will expire on February 28, 2018, unless renewed.

#### **JURISDICTION**

4. Accusation No. 800-2014-000004 was filed before the Board, and is currently pending against Respondent. On December 28, 2016, a true and correct copy of Accusation No. 800-2014-000004 and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent by certified mail at his address of record on file with the Board which was: 2683 Via De La Valle, Suite G-626, Del Mar, California, 92014-1911. On January 6, 2017, Respondent filed his Notice of Defense contesting Accusation No. 800-2014-000004. A true and correct copy of Accusation No. 800-2014-003574 is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth herein.

# **ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS**

- 5. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with his counsel, and fully understands the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004. Respondent has also carefully read, fully discussed with his counsel, and fully understands the effects of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order.
- 6. Respondent is fully aware of his legal rights in this matter, including the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004; the right to be represented by counsel at his own expense; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against him; the right to present evidence and to testify on his own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws, having been fully advised of same by his attorney of record, Joanna Ryan Shippee, Esq.
- 7. Having the benefit of counsel, Respondent hereby voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and every right set forth above.

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## **CULPABILITY**

- 8. Respondent does not contest that, at an administrative hearing, Complainant could establish a *prima facie* case with respect to the charges and allegations contained in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004 and that he has thereby subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687 to disciplinary action. Respondent further agrees to be bound by the Board's imposition of discipline as set forth in the Disciplinary Order below.
- 9. Respondent agrees that if he ever petitions for modification of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, or if an accusation and/or petition to revoke probation is filed against him before the Medical Board of California, all of the charges and allegations contained in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004 shall be deemed true, correct and fully admitted by Respondent for purposes of any such proceeding, or any other licensing proceeding involving Respondent in the State of California.

#### **CONTINGENCY**

- 10. The parties agree that this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order shall be submitted to the Board for its consideration in the above-entitled matter and, further, that the Board shall have a reasonable period of time in which to consider and act on this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order after receiving it. By signing this stipulation, Respondent fully understands and agrees that he may not withdraw his agreement or seek to rescind this stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it.
- and void and not binding upon the parties unless approved and adopted by the Board, except for this paragraph, which shall remain in full force and effect. Respondent fully understands and agrees that in deciding whether or not to approve and adopt this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, the Board may receive oral and written communications from its staff and/or the Attorney General's office. Communications pursuant to this paragraph shall not disqualify the Board, any member thereof, and/or any other person from future participation in this or any other matter affecting or involving Respondent. In the event that the Board, in its discretion, does not approve and adopt this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, with the exception of

this paragraph, it shall not become effective, shall be of no evidentiary value whatsoever, and shall not be relied upon or introduced in any disciplinary action by either party hereto.

Respondent further agrees that should the Board reject this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order for any reason, Respondent will assert no claim that the Board, or any member thereof, was prejudiced by its/his/her review, discussion and/or consideration of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order or of any matter or matters related hereto.

# ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

- 12. This Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is intended by the parties herein to be an integrated writing representing the complete, final and exclusive embodiment of the agreements of the parties in the above-entitled matter.
- 13. The parties agree that copies of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, including copies of the signatures of the parties, may be used in lieu of original documents and signatures and, further, that copies and signatures shall have the same force and effect as originals.
- 14. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree the Board may, without further notice to or opportunity to be heard by Respondent, issue and enter the following Disciplinary Order:

#### **DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687 issued to Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D., is revoked. However, the revocation is stayed and Respondent is placed on probation for three (3) years from the effective date of the Decision on the following terms and conditions.

1. <u>EDUCATION COURSE</u>. Within sixty (60) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and on an annual basis thereafter, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for its prior approval educational program(s) or course(s) which shall not be less than forty (40) hours per year, for each year of probation. The educational program(s) or course(s) shall be aimed at correcting any areas of deficient practice or knowledge and shall be Category I certified. The educational program(s) or course(s) shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure. Following

 the completion of each course, the Board or its designee may administer an examination to test Respondent's knowledge of the course. Respondent shall provide proof of attendance for sixty-five (65) hours of CME of which forty (40) hours were in satisfaction of this condition.

2. MEDICAL RECORD KEEPING COURSE. Within sixty (60) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a course in medical record keeping approved in advance by the Board or its designee. Respondent shall provide the approved course provider with any information and documents that the approved course provider may deem pertinent. Respondent shall participate in and successfully complete the classroom component of the course not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial enrollment. Respondent shall successfully complete any other component of the course within one (1) year of enrollment. The medical record keeping course shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure.

A medical record keeping course taken after the acts that gave rise to the charges in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, but prior to the effective date of the Decision may, in the sole discretion of the Board or its designee, be accepted towards the fulfillment of this condition if the course would have been approved by the Board or its designee had the course been taken after the effective date of this Decision.

Respondent shall submit a certification of successful completion to the Board or its designee not later than fifteen (15) calendar days after successfully completing the course, or not later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the effective date of the Decision, whichever is later.

3. PROFESSIONALISM PROGRAM (ETHICS COURSE). Within sixty (60) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a professionalism program, that meets the requirements of Title 16, California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 1358.1. Respondent shall participate in and successfully complete that program. Respondent shall provide any information and documents that the program may deem pertinent. Respondent shall successfully complete the classroom component of the program not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial enrollment, and the longitudinal component of the program not later than the time specified by the program, but no later than one (1) year after attending the classroom

component. The professionalism program shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure.

A professionalism program taken after the acts that gave rise to the charges in Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, but prior to the effective date of the Decision may, in the sole discretion of the Board or its designee, be accepted towards the fulfillment of this condition if the program would have been approved by the Board or its designee had the program been taken after the effective date of this Decision.

Respondent shall submit a certification of successful completion to the Board or its designee not later than fifteen (15) calendar days after successfully completing the program or not later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the effective date of the Decision, whichever is later.

4. MONITORING – PRACTICE. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval as a practice monitor, the name and qualifications of one or more licensed physicians and surgeons whose licenses are valid and in good standing, and who are preferably American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) certified. A monitor shall have no prior or current business or personal relationship with Respondent, or other relationship that could reasonably be expected to compromise the ability of the monitor to render fair and unbiased reports to the Board, including but not limited to any form of bartering, shall be in Respondent's field of practice, and must agree to serve as Respondent's monitor. Respondent shall pay all monitoring costs.

The Board or its designee shall provide the approved monitor with copies of the Decision and Disciplinary Order and Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, and a proposed monitoring plan. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the Decision and Disciplinary Order and Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, and proposed monitoring plan, the monitor shall submit a signed statement that the monitor has read the Decision and Disciplinary Order and Accusation No. 800-2014-000004, fully understands the role of a monitor, and agrees or disagrees with the proposed monitoring plan. If the monitor disagrees with the proposed monitoring plan, the monitor shall submit a revised monitoring plan with the signed statement for approval by the Board or its designee.

Within sixty (60) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and continuing throughout probation, Respondent's practice shall be monitored by the approved monitor. Respondent shall make all records available for immediate inspection and copying on the premises by the monitor at all times during business hours and shall retain the records for the entire term of probation.

If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a monitor within sixty (60) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall cease the practice of medicine until a monitor is approved to provide monitoring responsibility.

The monitor(s) shall submit a quarterly written report to the Board or its designee which includes an evaluation of Respondent's performance, indicating whether Respondent's practices are within the standards of practice of medicine, and whether Respondent is practicing medicine safely. It shall be the sole responsibility of Respondent to ensure that the monitor submits the quarterly written reports to the Board or its designee within ten (10) calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

If the monitor resigns or is no longer available, Respondent shall, within five (5) calendar days of such resignation or unavailability, submit to the Board or its designee, for prior approval, the name and qualifications of a replacement monitor who will be assuming that responsibility within fifteen (15) calendar days. If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a replacement monitor within 60 calendar days of the resignation or unavailability of the monitor, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall cease the practice of medicine until a replacement monitor is approved and assumes monitoring responsibility.

5. PROHIBITED PRACTICE. During probation, Respondent is prohibited from performing any work related to Immigration and Naturalization Service examinations including, but not limited to, completing paper work in connection with immigration applications and administering immunizations and/or vaccinations to immigration applicants.

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6. <u>NOTIFICATION</u>. Within seven (7) days of the effective date of this Decision, the Respondent shall provide a true copy of this Decision and Disciplinary Order and Accusation No. 800-2014-000004 to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges or membership are extended to Respondent, at any other facility where Respondent engages in the practice of medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies, and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance coverage to Respondent. Respondent shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its designee within fifteen (15) calendar days.

This condition shall apply to any change(s) in hospitals, other facilities or insurance carrier.

- 7. <u>OBEY ALL LAWS</u>. Respondent shall obey all federal, state and local laws, all rules governing the practice of medicine in California and remain in full compliance with any court ordered criminal probation, payments, and other orders.
- 8. <u>QUARTERLY DECLARATIONS</u>. Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all the conditions of probation.

Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations not later than ten (10) calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

GENERAL PROBATION REQUIREMENTS.

Compliance with Probation Unit

Respondent shall comply with the Board's probation unit.

Address Changes

Respondent shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of Respondent's business and residence addresses, email address (if available), and telephone number. Changes of such addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business and Professions Code section 2021(b).

#### Place of Practice

Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine in Respondent's or patient's place of residence, unless the patient resides in a skilled nursing facility or other similar licensed facility.

#### License Renewal

Respondent shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's license.

#### Travel or Residence Outside California

Respondent shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty (30) calendar days.

In the event Respondent should leave the State of California to reside or to practice, Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing thirty (30) calendar days prior to the dates of departure and return.

- 10. <u>INTERVIEW WITH THE BOARD OR ITS DESIGNEE</u>. Respondent shall be available in person upon request for interviews either at Respondent's place of business or at the probation unit office, with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.
- its designee in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of any periods of non-practice lasting more than thirty (30) calendar days and within fifteen (15) calendar days of Respondent's return to practice. Non-practice is defined as any period of time Respondent is not practicing medicine as defined in Business and Professions Code sections 2051 and 2052 for at least forty (40) hours in a calendar month in direct patient care, clinical activity or teaching, or other activity as approved by the Board. If Respondent resides in California and is considered to be in non-practice, Respondent shall comply with all terms and conditions of probation. All time spent in an intensive training program which has been approved by the Board or its designee shall not be considered non-practice and does not relieve Respondent from complying with all the terms and conditions of probation. Practicing medicine in another state of the United States or Federal

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jurisdiction while on probation with the medical licensing authority of that state or jurisdiction shall not be considered non-practice. A Board-ordered suspension of practice shall not be considered as a period of non-practice.

In the event Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation exceeds eighteen (18) calendar months, Respondent shall successfully complete the Federation of State Medical Boards' Special Purpose Examination, or, at the Board's discretion, a clinical competence assessment program that meets the criteria of Condition 18 of the current version of the Board's "Manual of Model Disciplinary Orders and Disciplinary Guidelines" prior to resuming the practice of medicine.

Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation shall not exceed two (2) years. Periods of non-practice will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term.

Periods of non-practice for a Respondent residing outside of California will relieve Respondent of the responsibility to comply with the probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws; General Probation Requirements; Quarterly Declarations; Abstain from the Use of Alcohol and/or Controlled Substances; and Biological Fluid Testing.

- 12. <u>COMPLETION OF PROBATION</u>. Respondent shall comply with all financial obligations (e.g., restitution and/or probation costs) not later than one hundred twenty (120) calendar days prior to the completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, Respondent's certificate shall be fully restored.
- 13. <u>VIOLATION OF PROBATION</u>. Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of probation. If Respondent violates probation in any respect, the Board, after giving Respondent notice and the opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and carry out the disciplinary order that was stayed. If an Accusation, or Petition to Revoke Probation, or an Interim Suspension Order is filed against Respondent during probation, the Board shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.

14. LICENSE SURRENDER. Following the effective date of this Decision, if Respondent ceases practicing due to retirement or health reasons or is otherwise unable to satisfy the terms and conditions of probation, Respondent may request to surrender his license. The Board reserves the right to evaluate Respondent's request and to exercise its discretion in determining whether or not to grant the request, or to take any other action deemed appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances. Upon formal acceptance of the surrender, Respondent shall within fifteen (15) calendar days deliver Respondent's wallet and wall certificate to the Board or its designee and Respondent shall no longer practice medicine. Respondent will no longer be subject to the terms and conditions of probation. If Respondent re-applies for a medical license, the application shall be treated as a petition for reinstatement of a revoked certificate.

15. PROBATION MONITORING COSTS. Respondent shall pay the costs associated with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be adjusted on an annual basis. Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year.

#### ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney, Joanna Ryan Shippee, Esq. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. G34687. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED: 926 2017 MICHAEL MICHOLAS MARKOPOULOS, M.D. Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D., the terms and conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and

Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED: 09/2/10/

JOANNA RYAN SHIPPER ESQ Attorney for Respondent

# **ENDORSEMENT**

The foregoing Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Medical Board of California.

Dated: September 27, 2017

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Respectfully submitted,

XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ Supervising Deputy Attorney General

JOSEPH F. MCKENNA III Deputy Attorney General Attorneys for Complainant

SD2016703285 Doc.No.81826506

# Exhibit A

Accusation No. 800-2014-000004

1	KAMALA D. HARRIS	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
2	Attorney General of California ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ			
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General JOSEPH F. MCKENNA III	FILED STATILOGICAL FORMIA		
	Deputy Attorney General	DO SERVE AS VESTOR CALIFORNIA		
4	State Bar No. 231195 600 West Broadway, Suite 1800	Filt Secretary 16		
5	San Diego, CA 92101	- Lectarian		
6	P.O. Box 85266 San Diego, CA 92186-5266			
7	Telephone: (619) 738-9417 Facsimile: (619) 645-2061			
8	Attorneys for Complainant			
9				
	BEFOI	or the		
10	MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA			
11		CONSUMER AFFAIRS CALIFORNIA		
12				
13	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 800-2014-000004		
14	Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D.	ACCUSATION		
15.	2683 Via De La Valle, Suite G-626 Del Mar, California 92014-1911			
16	Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.			
17	G 34687,			
	Respondent.			
18				
19				
20	Complainant alleges:			
21	PAF	RTIES		
22	1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in her official			
23	capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer			
24	Affairs (Board).			
25	2. On or about July 1, 1977, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's			
26	Certificate Number G 34687 to Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D. (Respondent). The			
27	Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the			
28	charges brought herein and will expire on February 28, 2018, unless renewed.			
		1		

(MICHAEL NICHOLAS MARKOPOULOS, M.D.) ACCUSATION NO. 800-2014-000004

#### **JURISDICTION**

- 3. This Accusation is brought before the Board, under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code (Code) unless otherwise indicated.
- 4. Section 2227 of the Code provides that a licensee who is found guilty under the Medical Practice Act may have his or her license revoked, suspended for a period not to exceed one year, placed on probation and required to pay the costs of probation monitoring, or such other action taken in relation to discipline as the Board deems proper.
  - 5. Section 2234 of the Code, states:

"The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- "(b) Gross negligence.
- "(c) Repeated negligent acts. To be repeated, there must be two or more negligent acts or omissions. An initial negligent act or omission followed by a separate and distinct departure from the applicable standard of care shall constitute repeated negligent acts.

"…"

- 6. Unprofessional conduct under section 2234 of the Code is conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession, or conduct which is unbecoming to a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine. (Shea v. Board of Medical Examiners (1978) 81 Cal.App.3d 564, 575.)
  - 7. Section 2069 of the Code states:
  - "(a)(1) Notwithstanding any other law, a medical assistant may administer medication only by intradermal, subcutaneous, or intramuscular injections and perform skin tests and additional technical supportive services upon the specific authorization and supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon or a licensed

podiatrist. A medical assistant may also perform all these tasks and services upon the specific authorization of a physician assistant, a nurse practitioner, or a certified nurse-midwife.

- "(b) As used in this section and Sections 2070 and 2071, the following definitions apply:
- "(1) 'Medical assistant' means a person who may be unlicensed, who performs basic administrative, clerical, and technical supportive services in compliance with this section and Section 2070 for a licensed physician and surgeon or a licensed podiatrist, or group thereof, for a medical or podiatry corporation, for a physician assistant, a nurse practitioner, or a certified nurse-midwife as provided in subdivision (a), or for a health care service plan, who is at least 18 years of age, and who has had at least the minimum amount of hours of appropriate training pursuant to standards established by the board. The medical assistant shall be issued a certificate by the training institution or instructor indicating satisfactory completion of the required training. A copy of the certificate shall be retained as a record by each employer of the medical assistant.
- "(2) 'Specific authorization' means a specific written order prepared by the supervising physician and surgeon or the supervising podiatrist, or the physician assistant, the nurse practitioner, or the certified nurse-midwife as provided in subdivision (a), authorizing the procedures to be performed on a patient, which shall be placed in the patient's medical record, or a standing order prepared by the supervising physician and surgeon or the supervising podiatrist, or the physician assistant, the nurse practitioner, or the certified nurse-midwife as provided in subdivision (a), authorizing the procedures to be performed, the duration of which shall be consistent with accepted medical practice. A notation of the standing order shall be placed on the patient's medical record.

- "(3) 'Supervision' means the supervision of procedures authorized by this section by the following practitioners, within the scope of their respective practices, who shall be physically present in the treatment facility during the performance of those procedures:
  - "(A) A licensed physician and surgeon.

- "(4)(A) 'Technical supportive services' means simple routine medical tasks and procedures that may be safely performed by a medical assistant who has limited training and who functions under the supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon or a licensed podiatrist, or a physician assistant, a nurse practitioner, or a certified nurse-midwife as provided in subdivision (a).
- "(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing any of the following:

"(4) A medical assistant to perform any clinical laboratory test or examination for which he or she is not authorized by Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 1200).

...

# 8. Section 2071 of the Code states:

"The board shall adopt and administer regulations that establish standards for technical supportive services that may be performed by a medical assistant.

Nothing in this section shall prohibit the board from amending or repealing regulations covering medical assistants. ... Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede or modify that portion of the Administrative Procedure Act that relates to the procedure for the adoption of regulations and which is set forth in Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code."

#### 9. Section 2264 of the Code states:

"The employing, directly or indirectly, the aiding, or the abetting of any unlicensed person or any suspended, revoked, or unlicensed practitioner to engage in the practice of medicine or any other mode of treating the sick or afflicted which requires a license to practice constitutes unprofessional conduct."

#### 10. Section 2266 of the Code states:

"The failure of a physician and surgeon to maintain adequate and accurate records relating to the provision of services to their patients constitutes unprofessional conduct."

- 11. Section 1366, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, states:
- "(a) A medical assistant may perform additional technical supportive services such as those specified herein provided that all of the following conditions are met:
- "(1) Each technical supportive service is not prohibited by another provision of law, including Section 2069(c) of the code, or these regulations, and is a usual and customary part of the medical or podiatric practice where the medical assistant is employed;
- "(2) The supervising physician or podiatrist authorizes the medical assistant to perform the service and shall be responsible for the patient's treatment and care;
- "(3) The medical assistant has completed the training specified in Sections 1366.2, 1366.3, and 1366.4 and has demonstrated competence in the performance of the service;
- "(4) A record shall be made in the patient chart or other record, including a computerized record, if any, of each technical supportive service performed by the medical assistant, indicating the name, initials or other identifier of the medical assistant, the date and time, a description of the service performed, and the name of the physician or podiatrist who gave the medical assistant patient-specific authorization to perform the task or who authorized such performance under a patient-specific standing order.

- "(5) The supervising physician or podiatrist may, at his or her discretion, provide written instructions to be followed by a medical assistant in the performance of tasks or supportive services. Such written instructions may provide that a physician assistant or registered nurse may assign a task authorized by a physician or podiatrist.
- "(b) A medical assistant in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) may perform additional technical supportive services such as the following:
- "(1) Administer medication orally, sublingually, topically, vaginally or rectally, or by providing a single dose to a patient for immediate self-administration. Administer medication by inhalation if the medications are patient-specific and have been or will be routinely and repetitively administered to that patient. In every instance, prior to administration of medication by the medical assistant, a licensed physician or podiatrist, or another person authorized by law to do so shall verify the correct medication and dosage. Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing the administration of any anesthetic agent by a medical assistant.
- "(2) Perform electrocardiogram, electroencephalogram, or plethysmography tests, except full body plethysmography. Nothing in this section shall permit a medical assistant to perform tests involving the penetration of human tissues except for skin tests as provided in Section 2069 of the code, or to interpret test findings or results.
- "(11) Perform simple laboratory and screening tests customarily performed in a medical office.
  - "(e) Nothing in these regulations shall be construed to modify the requirement

that a licensed physician or podiatrist be physically present in the treatment facility as required in Section 2069 of the code.

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2. Section 1366.1, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, states:

"In order to administer medications by intramuscular, subcutaneous and intradermal injection, to perform skin tests, or to perform venipuncture of skin puncture for the purposes of withdrawing blood, a medical assistant shall have completed the minimum training prescribed herein. Training shall be for the duration required by the medical assistant to demonstrate to the supervising physician, podiatrist, or instructor, as referenced in Section 1366.3(a)(2), proficiency in the procedures to be performed as authorized by Sections 2069 or 2070 of the code, where applicable, but shall include no less than:

- "(a) Ten (10) clock hours of training in administering injections and performing skin tests, and/or
- "(b) Ten (10) clock hours of training in venipuncture and skin puncture for the purpose of withdrawing blood, and
- "(c) Satisfactory performance by the trainee of at least ten (10) each of intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intradermal injections and ten (10) skin tests, and/or at least ten (10) venipunctures and ten (10) skin punctures.

"

- "(e) Training in (a) through (d) above, shall include instruction and demonstration in:
  - "(1) pertinent anatomy and physiology appropriate to the procedures;
  - "(2) choice of equipment;
  - "(3) proper technique including sterile technique;
  - "(4) hazards and complications;
  - "(5) patient care following treatment or test;

- "(6) emergency procedures; and
- "(7) California law and regulations for medical assistants."
- 13. Section 1366.2, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, states:

"Prior to performing any of the additional technical supportive services provided in Section 1366, a medical assistant shall receive such training as, in the judgement of the supervising physician, podiatrist or instructor, as referenced in Section 1366.3(a)(2), is necessary to assure the medical assistant's competence in performing that service at the appropriate standard of care. Such training shall be administered pursuant to either subsection (a)(1) or (a)(2) of Section 1366.3."

- 14. Section 1366.3, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, states:
- "(a) Training required in Sections 1366, 1366.1 or 1366.2 may be administered in either of these settings:
- "(1) Under a licensed physician or podiatrist, who shall ascertain the proficiency of the medical assistant; or under a registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, physician assistant or a qualified medical assistant acting under the direction of a licensed physician or podiatrist who shall be responsible for determining the content of the training and the proficiency of the medical assistant except that training to administer medication by inhalation shall be provided by a licensed physician or respiratory care practitioner; or
- "(2) In a secondary, postsecondary, or adult education program in a public school authorized by the Department of Education, in a community college program provided for in Part 48 of Division 7 of the Education Code, or a postsecondary institution accredited by an accreditation agency recognized by the United States Department of Education or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education under Sections 94130 or 94311 of the Education Code. ...
- "(b) The supervising physician or podiatrist, pursuant to subsection (a)(1) or the instructor pursuant to subsection (a)(2) shall certify in writing the place and

date such training was administered, the content and duration of the training, and that the medical assistant was observed by the certifying physician, podiatrist, or instructor to demonstrate competence in the performance of each such task or service, and shall sign the certification. More than one task or service may be certified in a single document; separate certifications shall be made for subsequent training in additional tasks or services.

- "(c) For purposes of this section only, a 'qualified medical assistant' is a medical assistant who:
- "(1) is certified by a medical assistant certifying organization approved by the division;
- "(2) holds a credential to teach in a medical assistant training program at a community college; or
- "(3) is authorized to teach medical assistants in a private postsecondary institution accredited by an accreditation agency recognized by the United States Department of Education or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education."
- 15. Section 1366.4, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, states:

"Each medical assistant shall receive training in the Center for Disease Control 'Guidelines for Infection Control in Hospital Personnel' (July 1983) and shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the supervising physician, podiatrist or instructor that he or she understands the purposes and techniques of infection control."

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# FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

## (Gross Negligence)

- 16. Respondent has subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, as defined in section 2234, subdivision (b), of the Code, in that Respondent committed gross negligence in his care and treatment of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., R.M.B., C.G., and S.M., as more particularly alleged hereinafter:
  - (a) In 2013, Respondent was performing immigration physicals at a law office, twice a month, for patients who were potential immigrant applicants seeking to apply for residency or citizenship in the United States. Respondent would give immunization shots and tuberculin skin (TB) tests, and perform a complete physical examination pursuant to the requirements of Form I-693, "Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record", as required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The patient population Respondent saw at the law office mostly did not speak or understand English and were predominately Spanish speakers.<sup>2</sup>
  - (b) On May 8, 2014, Respondent was interviewed by Medical Board of California Investigator T.H. about Respondent's method and protocols involving immunization shots and TB tests given at the law office and follow up evaluation of TB test results with patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B. Respondent stated that the TB tests were administered with a TB syringe that delivered a subcutaneous shot of purified protein derivative (PPD) to the patients. Regarding his protocols for reading and evaluating TB test results, Respondent

The general purpose of Form I-693 is to require all immigration applicants receive a complete physical examination and determine whether applicant is inadmissible to the United States on public health grounds. Form I-693 is used to report results of a medical examination to USCIS and must be completed by a designated civil surgeon.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Respondent and his staff performing the immigration physical examinations did *not* speak or understand much Spanish, so they relied upon bi-lingual staff at the law office to communicate in Spanish with the patients during the physical examinations.

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admitted that he never saw the patients again (in person) after the PPD shot was given. Instead, Respondent relied upon the patients to contact him if there was a "positive reaction" to the PPD shot. Therefore, for all of these patients, Respondent never palpated the area for induration at the injection site and never documented those findings in their medical records. Rather than require patients to see him again for an evaluation within seventy-two (72) hours of the PPD shot, Respondent explained that he showed patients "a picture of a positive TB test that I had on my cell phone" and that he "explained to [patients] how to feel for it." Respondent further explained, if patients had a positive reaction to the PPD shot, they were expected to take a picture of the affected area and text it to him. If Respondent determined that there was a positive reaction after reviewing the picture on his cell phone, he stated that he would direct the patient to get a chest x-ray. Significantly, when asked during his interview with the Medical Board why he routinely documented and signed Form I-693 indicating negative reactions to PPD shots without ever seeing the patients in person, Respondent replied "[C]ause I believe them. When I see the picture it looks fine." Respondent then added, "I'm pretty confident that ... they're not positive, cause if they don't call me ... we call them back and we get a picture. And I'm pretty confident that that's readable."

(c) In or around August 2013, Respondent hired K.J. as an independent contractor to do temporary work that involved helping with giving immunization shots and PPD shots to patients getting immigration physical examinations at the law office, as well as completing related immigration paperwork. According to Respondent, K.J. represented to him when he hired her that she was a "medical assistant", but in fact that was not true and she held no certification as a medical assistant. Respondent stated that he immediately determined K.J. was not a medical assistant because she did not know how to give shots to patients during the immigration physical examinations that she was hired to help perform. Despite

finding K.J. to be "fairly incompetent", Respondent did not immediately fire her. Rather, Respondent explained that it was at the immigration law office where he "taught" K.J. how to prepare and administer immunization shots and PPD shots to patients. Respondent stated, "[A]t the immigration clinic, I did a few of them and I showed her how to do it and then she did it ... [K.J.] probably did about ten (immunization shots) total in the whole six months." According to Respondent, K.J. also administered approximately eight (8) PPD shots during the time that she worked for him. Respondent admitted that K.J. did not go through any training programs prior to administering the immunization shots and PPD shots.

Respondent stated that K.J. was fired in or around December 2013 after working for him for approximately five (5) months.

- (d) Regarding the vaccination documentation and medical records of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B., Respondent did not record required vaccination information and lab results of tests were missing. Significantly, the documentation for immunization shots and PPD shots given to the patients was incomplete in their medical records. Federal law requires what must be documented in the medical record when giving vaccinations, including:
  - 1. The vaccine manufacturer;
  - 2. The lot number of the vaccine;
  - 3. The date the vaccine is administered;
- 4. The name, office address, and title of the healthcare provider administering the vaccine;
- 5. The Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) edition date located in the lower right corner on the back of the VIS. When administering combination vaccines, all applicable VISs should be given and the individual VIS edition dates recorded; and
  - 6. The date the VIS is given to the patient, parent, or guardian.

In addition, the expiration date of the vaccine must be verified before injection. Prior to placing a PPD shot, the following must be documented:

- 1. Date and time of administration;
- 2. Injection site location; and
- 3. Lot number.

Respondent did not document much of the required vaccination information, as described above, in the medical records for patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B., after he administered their immunization shots and PPD shots. Respondent also did not document any PPD results in their medical records either. Lastly, other notable omissions were that R.H.C.'s medical record did not have a copy of the chest x-ray performed, and lab test results of Rapid Plasma Reagin (RPR) testing were missing from medical records for R.H.C. and J.F.N. Although the lab test results are missing from their medical records, interestingly, RPR results for R.H.C. and J.F.N. were documented as negative by Respondent in their immigration paperwork submitted to USCIS.

(e) On August 18, 2016, during a second interview with the Medical Board of California, conducted by with Division of Investigation's Health Quality Investigation Unit Investigator D.F., Respondent was asked about his method for performing immigration physicals at the law office. When asked about whether he performed abdominal examinations on patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., or R.M.B., Respondent admitted that he was unable to perform abdominal examinations on them because there was no exam table at the law office.

Notwithstanding Respondent's failure to conduct an abdominal examination for abnormalities of each patient, he completed and signed Form I-693 verifying to USCIS the health status of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> An RPR test is a blood test used to screen a person for syphilis.

(f) On August 18, 2016, during the same interview with investigator D.F.,
Respondent discussed his care and treatment of patients' C.G. and S.M., who are
in-patient residents of a long-term care facility. Respondent explained that he is
required to do sixty (60) day visits and annual examinations of C.G. and S.M.
Both patients have been on anti-seizure medication for many years, however,
Respondent agreed that the medical records indicate that neither patient has
"seized" in years. <sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding the long period of time that has passed since
their last seizure, there was no documentation in C.G.'s and S.M.'s medical
records regarding a tapering or stopping of seizure medication and/or a
consultation with neurology, if necessary. The notes in the medical records for
C.G. and S.M. are essentially identical, word for word, and appear carried over
from each visit by Respondent. Significantly, C.G. suffers from hypertension but
there are no blood pressure values recorded in the notes. Respondent does not
record any medical justification for changing the medication levels for C.G.; and
despite C.G. being a hypertensive patient, Respondent did not order annual
assessments of a basic metabolic panel, micro-albumin and/or lipids. For both
patients C.G. and S.M., it appears that Respondent's notes have been copied over
and over for several years with no meaningful changes in their comprehensive care
by Respondent.

- 17. Respondent committed gross negligence in his care and treatment of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., R.M.B., C.G., and S.M., which included, but was not limited to, the following:
  - (a) Respondent failed to document required elements regarding vaccination information and documentation in the medical records of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B.;

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Conduct occurring more than seven (7) years from the filing date of this Accusation is for informational purposes only and is not alleged as a basis for disciplinary action.

- (b) Respondent permitted K.J. to administer immunization shots and PPD shots to numerous patients while under his supervision, even though she had no medical training and Respondent failed to provide the adequate training that she needed prior to administering shots to patients.;
- (c) Respondent failed to properly interpret PPD shots and adequately document them in the medical records for patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B.;
- (d) Respondent failed to perform abdominal examinations of patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B., as part of their physical evaluation for Form I-693.;
- (e) Respondent repeatedly failed to maintain adequate and accurate records of the information he needed to track in order to complete immigration paperwork for patients B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., and R.M.B., including, documenting PPD readings and chest x-ray and RPR test results.; and
- (f) Respondent repeatedly failed to adequately document his care and treatment of patients C.G. and S.M., wherein his patient notes appear to be the same and are copied between patient examinations, and there is no evaluation and/or assessment of changing medications or other treatment modalities.

# SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

#### (Repeated Negligent Acts)

- 18. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, as defined in section 2234, subdivision (c), of the Code, in that Respondent committed repeated negligent acts in his care and treatment of B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., R.M.B., C.G., and S.M., as more particularly alleged hereinafter:
- 19. Paragraphs 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), 16(d), 16(e), and 16(f), above, are incorporated by reference and realleged as if fully set forth herein.

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#### THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

# (Aiding and Abetting the Unlicensed Practice of Medicine)

- 20. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687 to disciplinary action under sections 2069, 2071, 2234, and 2264, of the Code, and sections 1366, 1366.1, 1366.2, 1366.3, and 1366.4, title 16, of the California Code of Regulations, in that Respondent aided and abetted the unlicensed practice of medicine, as more particularly alleged hereinafter:
- 21. Paragraphs 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), and 16(d), above, are hereby incorporated by reference and realleged as if fully set forth herein

# FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

# (Failure to Maintain Adequate and Accurate Medical Records)

- 22. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, as defined in section 2266, of the Code, in that Respondent failed to maintain adequate and accurate records in connection with his care and treatment of B.I.L., C.L.I., G.D.R., J.F.N., R.H.C., R.M.B., C.G., and S.M., as more particularly alleged hereinafter:
- 23. Paragraphs 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), 16(d), 16(e), and 16(f), above, are hereby incorporated by reference and realleged as if fully set forth herein.

# FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

# (Unprofessional Conduct)

- 24. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, of the Code, in that Respondent has engaged in conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession, or conduct which is unbecoming to a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine, as more particularly alleged hereinafter:
- (a) Paragraphs 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), 16(d), 16(e), 16(f), 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23, above, are hereby incorporated by reference and realleged as if fully set forth herein.

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WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:

- 1. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number G 34687, issued to Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D.;
- 2. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D.'s authority to supervise physician assistants, pursuant to section 3527 of the Code.;
- 3. Ordering Respondent Michael Nicholas Markopoulos, M.D., to pay the Medical Board of California the costs of probation monitoring, if placed on probation.; and
  - 4. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

DATED: December 28, 2016

KIMBERLY KIRCHMEYER

Executive Director

Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs

State of California
Complainant